

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 DLOS-09 CIAE-00 INR-10
L-03 ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 TRSE-00
DODE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /083 R

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DRAFTED BY /PM:MJMATHESON
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DOD:WSOLF
ACDA:MMAZEAU
EUR:AKORKY
PM:DCARLSON

-----011472 092226Z /73

O R 092154Z JUN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 147389

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:NATO, PARM

SUBJECT: NATO EXPERTS MEETING ON HUMANITARIAN LAW IN ARMED
CONFLICT

1. PARA 2 BELOW CONTAINS US CONTRIBUTION TO EXPERTS DIS-
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CUSSION ON PROTOCOLS BEGINNING JUNE 28. PLEASE SUBMIT IT
TO APPROPRIATE NATO OFFICIAL.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

1. THE UNITED STATES IS PLEASED TO PROVIDE ITS PRE-
LIMINARY VIEWS CONCERNING VARIOUS FORMAL STATEMENTS WHICH
MAY BE APPROPRIATE UPON RATIFICATION OF THE TWO PROTOCOLS
TO THE 1949 GENEVA CONVENTIONS.

2. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE UNITED STATES IS CONSIDERING MAKING THE FOLLOWING FORMAL STATEMENTS AT THE TIME OF ITS RATIFICATION OF THE PROTOCOLS:

A. PROTOCOL I

(1) IT IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THAT THE RULES ESTABLISHED BY THIS PROTOCOL WERE NOT INTENDED TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON AND DO NOT REGULATE OR PROHIBIT THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

(2) IT IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THAT THE PHRASE "MILITARY DEPLOYMENT PRECEDING THE LAUNCHING OF AN ATTACK" IN ARTICLE 44, PARAGRAPH 3, MEANS ANY MOVEMENT TOWARDS A PLACE FROM WHICH AN ATTACK IS TO BE LAUNCHED, AND THAT THE SITUATIONS DESCRIBED IN THE SECOND SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH 3 OF ARTICLE 44 ARE VERY EXCEPTIONAL AND CAN EXIST ONLY IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY OR IN ARMED CONFLICTS DESCRIBED IN ARTICLE I, PARAGRAPH 4.

(3) IT IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THAT THE REFERENCES IN ARTICLES 51 AND 57 TO MILITARY ADVANTAGE ANTICIPATED FROM AN ATTACK ARE INTENDED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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REFER TO THE ADVANTAGE ANTICIPATED FROM THE ATTACK CONSIDERED AS A WHOLE, NOT FROM ISOLATED OR PARTICULAR PARTS OF THAT ATTACK.

(4) IT IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THAT ARTICLE 53 ESTABLISHES A SPECIAL PROTECTION FOR A LIMITED CLASS OF OBJECTS WHICH, BECAUSE OF THEIR RECOGNIZED IMPORTANCE, CONSTITUTE A PART OF THE CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF PEOPLES, AND THAT SUCH OBJECTS WILL LOSE THE SPECIAL PROTECTION OF THAT ARTICLE IF THEY ARE USED IN SUPPORT OF THE MILITARY EFFORT.

B. PROTOCOL II

IT IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THAT THE TERMS USED IN PART III OF THIS PROTOCOL WHICH ARE THE SAME AS THE TERMS DEFINED IN ARTICLE 8 OF PROTOCOL I SHALL SO FAR AS RELEVANT BE CONSTRUED IN THE SAME SENSE AS THOSE DEFINITIONS.

3. IN ADDITION TO THESE UNDERSTANDINGS ON PROTOCOLS I AND II, THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR THAT: IN RELATION TO ARTICLE 52 OF PROTOCOL I, A SPECIFIC AREA OF LAND MAY BE A MILITARY OBJECTIVE IF,

BECAUSE OF ITS LOCATION OR OTHER REASONS SPECIFIED IN THE ARTICLE, ITS TOTAL OR PARTIAL DESTRUCTION, CAPTURE OR NEUTRALIZATION IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES RULING AT THE TIME OFFERS DEFINITE MILITARY ADVANTAGE; AND THAT THE FIRST SENTENCE OF ARTICLE 52, PARAGRAPH 2, PROHIBITS ONLY SUCH ATTACKS AS MAY BE DIRECTED AGAINST NONMILITARY OBJECTIVES, AND DOES NOT DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF COLLATERAL DAMAGE CAUSED BY ATTACKS DIRECTED AGAINST MILITARY OBJECTIVES. IT SHOULD ALSO BE MADE CLEAR THAT THE PROVISIONS OF PARA IV, SECTION I OF PROTOCOL I MUST BE APPLIED TO THE ACTIONS OF COMMANDERS, AND OTHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING, DECIDING UPON OR EXECUTING ATTACKS, ON THE BASIS OF INFORMATION

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TION REASONABLY AVAILABLE TO THEM AT THE TIME THEY TAKE SUCH ACTIONS AND NOT ON THE BASIS OF HINDSIGHT. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOT DETERMINED WHAT FORM THESE CLARIFICATIONS SHOULD TAKE.

4. THE UNITED STATES LOOKS FORWARD TO RECEIVING THE VIEWS OF ITS ALLIANCE PARTNERS ON THESE QUESTIONS.
END TEXT. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, LAW OF WAR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE147389
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MJMATHESON
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780242-0486
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780673/aaaacia.tel
Line Count: 143
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b9b5bf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2406915
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATO EXPERTS MEETING ON HUMANITARIAN LAW IN ARMED CONFLICT
TAGS: PARM, NATO
To: USNATO
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b9b5bf8b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014